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SUBJECT: EU PARLIAMENT U.S. RELATIONS RESOLUTION MIXED

Classified By: USEU POLOFF TODD HUIZINGA,
FOR REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D)

¶11. (C) Summary: On June 19 the European Parliament (EP) passed a resolution on "A Renewed Transatlantic Relationship for the Third Millennium." Foreign Relations Committee Chair Elmar Brok, a German Christian Democrat and strong advocate of close transatlantic ties, drafted the resolution and timed it to appear on the eve of the June 25 U.S.-EU summit. The intent was constructively to point the way to renewed U.S.-EU ties, and most MEP's believe (or would want to believe) the resolution did that. Despite the positive intent, however, the final resolution is replete with passages chiding the U.S. for its stances on the International Criminal Court, the Kyoto Protocol, the death penalty, etc. For the majority of MEPs, the desire to assert a European voice on these hot-button issues, especially after Iraq, remains strong. In that context, the fact that the strongest pro-Americans in the EP voted against the resolution only served to illustrate their isolation. On a positive note, the EP resolution did affirm the importance of good U.S.-EU relations. End summary.

The Saga of a Resolution:
From A Call for a New Start to
a Model of Ambivalence

¶12. (C) We first learned in early May that the resolution was under consideration and that the drafter was British Conservative MEP James Elles, the Foreign Affairs Committee's Rapporteur on relations with the U.S. Elles responded positively to our suggestion that a resolution expressing goodwill towards the U.S. in the wake of tensions over Iraq provided an opportunity for the EP to be noticed and appreciated.

¶13. (C) On the basis of this discussion with Elles and the office of EP President Pat Cox, we engaged to see if the EP, or Pat Cox himself, could make some kind of additional statement about how the U.S.-EU relationship could move forward again. Cox was interested in having such a statement in hand to present in the run-up to the June 25 U.S.-EU Summit. Despite the intentions of our EP interlocutors, however, the efforts of the EP leaders got caught in the prevailing ambivalence of most MEPs towards the U.S. First, the resolution was not ready to be passed by early June. In May, drafting responsibility shifted from Elles to Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Brok, and the new target date became approval in Committee on June 11 followed by final approval in plenary on June 19. Second and more importantly, the resolution changed into a lengthy laundry list of complaints about the U.S. instead of the originally desired gesture of good will.

The Resolution Itself:
A Mixture of the
Good and the Bad

¶14. (U) After the usual series of clauses referring to earlier declarations, treaty articles and the like, the resolution begins with solid affirmations of the importance and salutary effects of strong transatlantic ties, such as: "reaffirming (the European Parliament's) commitment to the democratic values which are the foundation of...the transatlantic community;" "balanced EU-US relations are important to global peace and stability;" "stressing...the positive results achieved in the field of external relations when a common approach...(is) developed;" "in economic terms, Europe and the USA are the two most closely bound regions in the world;" "by acting together Europe and the United States could develop solutions to global challenges;" and many similar passages.

¶15. (SBU) The resolution goes on to advocate the creation of additional structures to underpin U.S.-EU dialogue, and to assert that a stronger EU is essential to progress in transatlantic relations. Some of the relevant passages include: "whereas the EU and the USA have treaties and agreements with almost every State in the world, but not with each other; whereas a new common framework could be created in economic and trade policy...;" "whereas greater involvement of legislators on both sides of the Atlantic is a

fundamental prerequisite for enhancing the whole transatlantic process;" "stresses that the EU will only be recognized as a partner if (it has) a real CFSP and that this requires the extension of qualified majority voting in the Council to...the field of the Foreign and Security Policy, the establishment of a European common diplomatic service, enhanced cooperation in defense policy...;" "underlines that EU-USA relations need a project aimed at enhancing...the partnership and that a...EU-US Framework Treaty...could be such a project;" "underlines...that the existing interparliamentary exchange should be gradually transformed into a de facto 'Transatlantic Assembly'".

16. (SBU) However, there are numerous clauses chiding the U.S. for not agreeing with the majority of the EP on a panoply of issues, including the death penalty, GMO's, international instruments on the rights of the child, and "safeguarding the treatment of prisoners of war in the wake of the recent conflicts." One clause implicitly makes U.S. agreement with the EU on the Kyoto Protocol and the ICC a pre-condition of better transatlantic relations: "responding along the same lines to...global warming (i.e., by ratifying and implementing the minimum standards f the Kyoto Protocol) and that of global justice (i.e. the functioning of the International Criminal Court)...must become a priority in the reinforcement of transatlantic relations." The resolution also contains a rather verbose swipe at American neo-conservatives: "(The EP) expresses concerns that the EU-US partnership could be undermined...by the apparently growing influence of those neo-conservative currents in US politics which emphasize unilateral, and often military, solutions to global problems at the expense of the traditions of more than 50 years of US internationalism and multilateralism...."

Strong Support from Conservatives,
Liberals, Socialists

17. (U) The resolution was passed by a vote of 303 in favor, 109 against and 47 abstentions. A roll-call of the vote was not published, but we confirmed that among those voting in favor were large majorities of the Social Democrats (PSE), of the Liberal Democrats (ELDR) and of the European People's Party (EPP--Christian Democrats and Conservatives), except the British Conservatives.

MEPs and Staffers: Goodwill
Should Not Silence Critique

18. (SBU) Jacques Lecarte, ELDR Foreign Affairs staffer, told us that the consensus among both ELDR and PSE MEP's was that the resolution was a balanced mix of statements on the strengths and importance of the relationship with the U.S. and an honest assessment of the problems in the relationship. The EPP view was similar, he said. In response to our observation that the British Conservative group within the EPP voted against it, Lecarte laughed and said, "as always."

19. (C) German PSE MEP Erika Mann told us during preparation of the resolution that she, as an Atlanticist Social Democrat, was against tabling the resolution. She predicted that it would contain significant anti-U.S. content. After the final vote, Mann's staffer told us that Mann's concern had been validated -- that the resolution contained too much critique of the U.S. to be understood in the U.S. as the goodwill gesture that many in the EP want it to be.

10. (C) ELDR Secretary-General Alexander Beels told us that the ICC "had to be in there" because of European anger at American pressure on EU accession states to sign Article 98 agreements and thereby undermine the ICC. Carlo Chicco, the head staffer of the Transatlantic Legislative Dialogue, averred that "American arrogance," such as in "threatening to move NATO out of Belgium" because of the Belgian Universal Competence law, rendered it impossible for MEPs representing angry European citizens to refrain from critical comments on America's rejection of the ICC.

The Strongest Pro-Americans
Voted Against

11. (U) The generally most fervent Atlanticists in the EP, the British Conservatives and the Dutch Calvinist Alliance (VU), voted against the resolution as not positive enough towards the United States.

12. (C) Vice-Chairman of the EP Subcommittee on the U.S., Bas Belder of the VU, and British Conservative Geoffrey Van Orden together tabled amendments striking all of the language critical of the U.S. All of these amendments were rejected

overwhelmingly in the Foreign Affairs Committee. After talking with us, Belder had made a plea in a plenary session on June 4 that renewing transatlantic relations would require that Europeans approach the U.S. with an attitude of trust rather than suspicion. He added that the resolution should not include a laundry list of European complaints that would cloud the message of friendship towards the U.S.

¶13. (U) British Conservative MEP Charles Tannock sent us the Explanation of Vote he had drafted for his party group. It declares that, despite the "good in this resolution - a commitment to act together to develop common solutions to global problems...", the British Conservatives are forced to vote against the resolution because of references which are not helpful to good relations. The language following is specific on unilateralism and the ICC and a ringing condemnation of anti-Americanism in Europe: "There is (in the resolution) a reference to unilateral approaches to problems that is offensive and which ignores the pre-eminent role which the United States as the world's largest and most powerful country must inevitably play if the values to which we subscribe are to be upheld. The insistence that the U.S. share Europe's view on the ICC is also made plain - despite the problems that an unamended statute would cause for the U.S. at present. We cannot expect the Americans to be multilateralist and engaged in the world and to risk malicious prosecution of their civilian and political leaders in the way that Europe requires. Equally there is no need for Europe continually to seek disagreement with the U.S. over the death penalty which remains legal in international law. We need to respect their difference of opinion, not attempt to raise it as a symbol of European moral superiority over the U.S. We need to co-operate together, not brandish sticks. There has been too much anti-Americanism in Europe recently and Europe needs to remember what it owes to America."

¶14. (C) Comment: The EP resolution is not a surprise. It reflects the current disposition in Brussels (and Strasbourg, where the EP holds its monthly sessions) to take America to task for disagreeing with Europe on the hot-button issues such as the ICC and global warming. Most disheartening is that, even while attempting to send a positive signal and bring U.S.-EU relations forward, the EP did not seriously consider lowering the volume of their complaints. It is clear that we have a lot of work to do with the EP, especially as it gains new power under the Convention in the Justice and Home Affairs area, which could complicate, *inter alia*, management of homeland security concerns where the EP has been sharply critical. End comment.

FOSTER